

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-04 LAB-01 SIL-01 OMB-01

NIC-01 DRC-01 /069 W

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P 162005Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3268

INFO AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 24467

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FR

SUBJECT: THE ASSISES OF FRENCH SOCIALISM -- SOCIALIST/  
COMMUNIST BICKERING

SUMMARY. AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF CONSIDERABLE  
DISSENSION BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) AND THE  
FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF). THE ASSISES OF SOCIALISM,  
OCTOBER 12-13, BROUGHT TOGETHER THREE ELEMENTS OF THE  
LEFT: THE PS, A PART OF THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE  
UNITED SOCIALIST PARTY (PSU), AND PROMINENT LEADERS OF  
LABOR (MAINLY CFDT). THE ASSISES, BILLED AS AN  
INTENSIVE MEETING TO MOBILIZE THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT  
INTO A SINGLE PARTY, WERE PUTATIVELY TO EXAMINE A  
"PLAN FOR SOCIETY" DRAFTED BY THEIR ORGANIZING  
COMMITTEE. IN FACT, THE MEETING TURNED INTO A  
CELEBRATION OF THE SOCIALISTS' SENSE OF THEIR OWN  
POWER AND A LONG-PLANNED ACCEPTANCE OF AUTOGESTION  
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(WORKER MANAGEMENT).

THE PCF, ALREADY IRRITATED BY PS SUCCESSES DURING THE RECENT PARTIAL LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, TREATED THE ASSISES WITH GREAT SUSPICION, CLAIMING THAT THEY MIGHT RESULT IN A DIMINUTION OF THE COMMON PROGRAM OF THE LEFT. AS A RESULT OF A BITTER EXCHANGE OF NAME-CALLING, A PCF/PS "SUMMIT" MEETING SCHEDULED FOR TWO DAYS AFTER THE ASSISES, WAS POSTPONED. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, FEARS OF A SPLIT IN THE UNITED LEFT SEEM UNFOUNDED.

END SUMMARY.

1. THE ASSISES. FIFTEEN HUNDRED MEMBERS OF THREE "COMPONENTS" MET FOR TWO DAYS IN PARIS' SLEEKLY MODERN HOTEL PLM-SAINT JACQUES. THE ASSISES, CALLED BY FRANCOIS MITTERRAND IN MAY 1974 AS ONE MEANS TO BUILD UPON THE NEAR SOCIALIST VICTORY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, WERE ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO DO THREE THINGS: CONSECRATE THE INTEGRATION OF THE PSU WITH THE PS, OPEN STRONG LINES OF ALLIANCE BETWEEN A NEWLY RECREATED SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT (MAINLY CFTD), AND ADOPT AUTOGESTION (WORKER MANAGEMENT) AS A PROGRAMMATIC GOAL, BUT THERE WERE SEVERAL ROADBLOCKS ON THE WAY. MICHEL ROCARD, THE INTELLECTUAL IDEOLOGUE WHO UNTIL RECENTLY LED THE PSU, FAILED IN THE COURSE OF A RECENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING TO RALLY HIS PARTY BEHIND HIM, THUS BECOMING A SPOKESMAN FOR NO CLEARLY DEFINED CONSTITUENCY. VARIOUS LEADERS WITHIN THE CFTD FOUND THEMSELVES UNDER ATTACK BY THEIR MEMBERS FOR BECOMING TOO "POLITICAL". THE ASSISES THUS BECAME AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN A RESURGENT PS, ROCARD AND ROBERT CHAPUIS (THE TWO PSU OFFICIALS MOST LINKED TO THE PS) AND THE "THIRD COMPONENT", AN ILL-DEFINED GROUP OF CFTD AND CGT UNION LEADERS (NONE FROM FORCE OUVRIERE) WHICH DEBATED AND ENDORSED THE "PLAN FOR SOCIETY" AND AUTOGESTION.

2. THE PCF PRIOR TO THE ASSISES. IN THE WEEK BEFORE THE ASSISES, THE PCF HAD UNDERTAKEN A PERSISTENT CAMPAIGN OF ATTACKS ON PS LEADERSHIP ACCUSING IT OF PLAYING "THE SAME GAME AS THE CAPITALISTS" IN CALLING CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR A STEADY GROWTH TO THE PS. AMONG POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR THIS CAMPAIGN ARE:

- A GROWING FEELING ON THE PART OF MANY PCF RANK AND FILE THAT THE PARTY'S STRATEGY OF A UNITED LEFT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POOR PCF SHOWING IN THE PARTIAL LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS;
- A GROWING FEAR THAT AN ENLARGED PS WOULD MOVE

TOWARDS "SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC SOLUTIONS";  
-- A FEAR THAT MITTERRAND -- PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE INNOVATIVE MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN OF  
THE PS -- IS GROWING TOO POWERFUL.

PCF DEPUTIES JUST BEFORE THE ASSISES WERE EVEN HEARD TO  
SPEAK OF A FEAR THAT AN ENLARGED PS WOULD BECOME MORE  
CONCERNED WITH THE LABOR ORIENTED GOAL OF AUTOGESTION  
(WORKER MANAGEMENT) THAN WITH POLITICAL GOALS. THIS

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3269

INFO AMCONSUL LYON

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AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 24467

THE PCF REGARDED AS "IRRESPONSIBLE ROMANTICISM."

3. MITTERRAND'S "SLAP" AT THE PCF: THE ASSISES  
GAVE MOST OF THE BETTER-KNOWN FIGURES OF THE PS AN  
OPPORTUNITY TO PAY MINIMUM FEALTY TO THE COMMON PROGRAM  
WHICH STILL SEEMS A SYMBOL OF PS, PCF AND LEFT

RADICAL (RG) UNITY WITHIN THE UNITED LEFT. THE MAJOR EXCEPTION TO THIS MASS RENEWAL OF THE FAITH CAME IN MITTERRAND'S KEYNOTE ADDRESS IN WHICH HE SMILINGLY SAID THAT UP UNTIL 18 MONTHS AGO HE HAD SPOKEN FREQUENTLY OF A MEETING TO RE-BALANCE THE LEFT (CODE WORDS FOR GAINING MORE STRENGTH THAN THE PCF) BUT THAT HE NO LONGER NEEDED TO SPEAK OF THIS BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

4. SPARKS IN THE TINDER. AFTER THE OPENING OF THE ASSISES, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PCF SAID THAT MITTERRAND'S SPEECH REPRESENTED "AN ATTITUDE WHICH AIMS AT WEAKENING THE POSITIONS OF THE PCF AND WHICH THUS REJOINS THE ATTITUDE OF THE GREAT CAPITALISTS". IN REBUTTAL, THE PS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHOSE TO POSTPONE MEETINGS OF THE JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED LEFT ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 15. IN A SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT GEORGES MARCHAIS, PCF SECRETARY-GENERAL, REGRETTED THE DECISION BUT SAID THAT THE PCF "COULD NOT SUBMIT TO BLACKMAIL".

5. CONCLUSIONS. FOR THE MOMENT, FEARS OF A SPLIT IN THE UNITED LEFT SEEM UNFOUNDED. MITTERRAND CANNOT SEEM TO RESIST A CERTAIN PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC IN WHICH HE ATTEMPTS TO PLACE HIMSELF CN MORE "RESPONSIBLE" -- READ ANTI-COMMUNIST -- GROUND. HIS PCF PARTNERS NO DOUBT FEEL THAT THE PS, RE-INVIGORATED BY NEAR VICTORY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, IS MOVING TOWARDS AN EVER-INCREASING SHARE OF THE FRENCH ELECTORATE. IF, IN ORDER TO DO SO, AN ENLARGED PS ADOPTS CERTAIN PROGRAMS OF TRADE UNION MOVEMENT SUCH AS AUTOGESTION AND THEREBY UNDERCUTS THE PCF IN ONE OF ITS TRADITIONAL CONSTITUENCIES, THE PCF COULD FEEL ITSELF SERIOUSLY THREATENED. GIVEN THAT PERCEPTION, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR NUMBERS OF PCF RANK AND FILERS TO FORCE THE HAND OF THE PARTY'S LEADERS WHOSE COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON PROGRAM IS NOW PUBLICLY COMPLETE. WE FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THE PS/PCF QUARREL SHOULD NOT BE OVERDRAMATIZED. INSPITE OF ITS MOMENTARY PIQUE OVER THE PARTIAL ELECTIONS, THE PCF WILL PROBABLY CONCLUDE THAT ONLY BY STAYING IN THE UNITED LEFT CAN IT HOPE TO GAIN SEATS IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS AND EVENTUALLY ACCEDE TO POWER. BEHIND THE CURRENT BICKERING WE ARE WITNESSING THE GROWTH OF A MULTI-CONSTITUENCY SOCIALIST PARTY WHICH IN THE LONG RUN MAY BECOME THE STRONGEST MEMBER OF THE UNITED LEFT.

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